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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET
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BULLETIN NO. 66-3

October 12, 1965

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Planning-Programming-Budgeting

1. Purpose. The President has directed the introduction of an integrated Planning-Programming-Budgeting system in the executive branch. This Bulletin contains instructions for the establishment of such a system. It will be followed by additional instructions, including more explicit policy and procedural guidelines for use of the system in the annual Budget Preview.

2. Application of instructions. This Bulletin applies in all respects to the agencies listed in Section A of Exhibit 1. The agencies listed in Section B of that Exhibit are encouraged to apply the principles and procedures for the development and review of programs to the extent practical. (In this Bulletin, the word "agency" is used to designate departments and establishments; the word "bureau" is used to designate principal subordinate units.)

3. Background and need. A budget is a financial expression of a program plan. Both formal instructions (such as those contained in Bureau of the Budget Circular No. A-11) and training materials on budgeting have stressed that setting goals, defining objectives, and developing planned programs for achieving those objectives are important integral parts of preparing and justifying a budget submission.

Under present practices, however, program review for decision making has frequently been concentrated within too short a period; objectives of agency programs and activities have too often not been specified with enough clarity and concreteness; accomplishments have not always been specified concretely; alternatives have been insufficiently presented for consideration by top management; in a number of cases the future year costs of present decisions have not been laid out systematically enough; and formalized planning and systems analysis have had too little effect on budget decisions.

To help remedy these shortcomings the planning and budget system in each agency should be made to provide more effective information and analyses to assist line managers, the agency head, and the President in judging needs and in deciding on the use of resources and their allocation among competing claims. The establishment of a Planning, Programming,

and Budgeting System in accordance with this Bulletin will make needed improvement possible.

While the improved system is intended for year-round use within each agency, its results will be especially brought into focus in connection with the spring Preview. It should lead to more informed and coordinated budget recommendations.

4. Basic concepts and design.

a. The new Planning-Programming-Budgeting system is based on three concepts:

(1) The existence in each agency of an Analytic capability which carries out continuing in-depth analyses by permanent specialized staffs of the agency's objectives and its various programs to meet these objectives.

(2) The existence of a multi-year Planning and Programming process which incorporates and uses an information system to present data in meaningful categories essential to the making of major decisions by agency heads and by the President.

(3) The existence of a Budgeting process which can take broad program decisions, translate them into more refined decisions in a budget context, and present the appropriate program and financial data for Presidential and Congressional action.

b. Essential to the system are:

(1) An output-oriented (this term is used interchangeably with mission-oriented or objectives-oriented) program structure (sometimes also called a program format) which presents data on all of the operations and activities of the agency in categories which reflect the agency's end purposes or objectives. This is discussed in more detail in paragraph 5, below.

(2) Analyses of possible alternative objectives of the agency and of alternative programs for meeting these objectives. Many different techniques of analysis will be appropriate, but central should be the carrying out of broad systems analyses in which alternative programs will be compared with respect to both their costs and their benefits.

(3) Adherence to a time cycle within which well-considered information and recommendations will be produced at the times needed for decision-making and for the development of the President's budget and legislative program. An illustrative cycle which does this is described in paragraph 9.

(4) Acceptance by line officials (from operating levels up to the agency head), with appropriate staff support, of responsibility for the establishment and effective use of the system.

c. The products of the system will include:

(1) A comprehensive multi-year Program and Financial Plan systematically updated.

(2) Analyses, including Program Memoranda, prepared annually and used in the budget Preview, Special Studies in depth from time to time, and other information which will contribute to the annual budget process.

d. The overall system is designed to enable each agency to:

(1) Make available to top management more concrete and specific data relevant to broad decisions;

(2) Spell out more concretely the objectives of Government programs;

(3) Analyze systematically and present for agency head and Presidential review and decision possible alternative objectives and alternative programs to meet those objectives;

(4) Evaluate thoroughly and compare the benefits and costs of programs;

(5) Produce total rather than partial cost estimates of programs;

(6) Present on a multi-year basis the prospective costs and accomplishments of programs;

(7) Review objectives and conduct program analyses on a continuing, year-round basis, instead of on a crowded schedule to meet budget deadlines.

e. The entire system must operate within the framework of overall policy guidance -- from the President to the agency head, and from the agency head to his central planning, programming, and budgeting staffs.

and to his line managers. Fiscal policy considerations and other aspects of Presidential policy will be provided by the Bureau of the Budget in accordance with the President's program. Modifications will also have to be made from time to time to reflect changing external conditions, Congressional action, and other factors.

5. The program structure.

a. An early and essential step for each agency is the determination of a series of output-oriented categories which, together, cover the total work of the agency. These will serve as a basic framework for the planning, programming, and budgeting processes (including work on systems analysis, reporting, evaluation of accomplishments, and other aspects of management) and for relating these processes to each other. The following principles should guide the development of such output categories.

(1) Program categories are groupings of agency programs (or activities or operations) which serve the same broad objective (or mission) or which have generally similar objectives. Succinct captions or headings describing the objective should be applied to each such grouping. Obviously, each program category will contain programs which are complementary or are close substitutes in relation to the objectives to be attained. For example, a broad program objective is improvement of higher education. This could be a program category, and as such would contain Federal programs aiding undergraduate, graduate and vocational education, including construction of facilities, as well as such auxiliary Federal activities as library support and relevant research programs. For purposes of illustration and to aid understanding, Exhibit 2 shows some program structures as they might be applied to two organizational units within different agencies; the same approach, of course, applies to the agency as a whole.

(2) Program subcategories are subdivisions which should be established within each program category, combining agency programs (or activities or operations) on the basis of narrower objectives contributing directly to the broad objectives for the program category as a whole. Thus, in the example given above, improvement of engineering and science and of language training could be two program subcategories within the program category of improvement of higher education.

(3) Program elements are usually subdivisions of program subcategories and comprise the specific products (i.e., the goods and services) that contribute to the agency's objectives. Each program element is an integrated activity which combines personnel, other services, equipment and facilities. An example of a program element expressed in terms of the objectives served would be the number of teachers to be trained in using new mathematics.

b. The program structure will not necessarily reflect organization structure. It will be appropriate and desirable in many cases to have the basic program categories cut across bureau lines to facilitate comparisons and suggest possible trade-offs among elements which are close substitutes. It is also desirable to develop program formats which facilitate comparisons across agency lines (e.g., in urban transportation and in recreation).

c. Basic research activities may not be and frequently are not mission or output oriented. Whenever this is the case, such activities should be identified as a separate program category or subcategory as appropriate. However, applied research and development is usually associated with a specific program objective and should be included in the same program category as the other activities related to that objective.

d. To facilitate top level review, the number of program categories should be limited. For example, a Cabinet Department should have as many as 15 program categories in only a rare and exceptional case.

e. Program categories and subcategories should not be restricted by the present appropriation pattern or budget activity structure. (Eventually, however, it may be necessary and desirable for the "Program by Activity" portion of the schedules in the Budget Appendix to be brought into line with the program structure developed according to this Bulletin.)

6. The Multi-year Program and Financial Plan.

a. The entire process is designed to provide information essential to the making of major decisions in a compact and logical form. A principal product of the process will be a document, the Multi-Year Program and Financial Plan of the agency.

b. Thus, the process is concerned with developing for agency head review, and, after his official approval or modification, for Bureau of the Budget and Presidential review (as summarized in Program Memoranda, per paragraph 7c) a translation of concretely specified agency objectives into combinations of agency activities and operations designed to reach such objectives in each of the stated time periods.

c. The Program and Financial Plan will:

(1) Be set forth on the basis of the program structure described in paragraph 5, above.

(2) Cover a period of years, usually five, although the number will vary with the considerations pertinent to particular agencies; for example, a longer time span would be appropriate for timber production and for large multiple-purpose water resource projects. The multi-year feature is not to be compromised by the expiration of legislation at an earlier date, since extension or renewal, with possible modification, of the legislation should be reflected in the Plan.

(3) Include activities under contemplated or possible new legislation as well as those presently authorized.

(4) Show the program levels which the agency head thinks will be appropriate over the entire period covered by the multi-year plan.

(5) Express objectives and planned accomplishments, wherever possible, in quantitative non-financial terms. For example, physical description of program elements might include the additional capacity (in terms of numbers to be accommodated) of recreational facilities to be built in national forests, the number of youths to be trained in Job Corps camps along with measures of the kinds and intensity of training, the number of hours of Spanish language broadcasts of the Voice of America, the number of children to receive pre-school training, and the number of patients in Federally-supported mental hospitals. In some programs, it may not be possible to obtain or develop adequate measures in quantitative physical terms such as these but it is important to do so whenever feasible. In any case, objectives and performance should be described in as specific and concrete terms as possible.

(6) Where relevant, relate the physical description of Federal programs to the entire universe to be served. For example, a poverty program plan directed at aged poor should describe not only the numbers receiving specific Federal benefits but might well show what proportion of the entire aged poor population is being benefited.

(7) Associate financial data with the physical data to show the cost of carrying out the activity described. Cost data should be expressed in systems terms. That is, all costs -- such as capital outlay, research and development, grants and subsidies, and current costs of operations (including maintenance) -- which are associated with a program element should be assigned to that element. These component costs generally can be derived from existing appropriation and accounting categories. Where there are receipts, such as the collection of user charges or proceeds from sales of commodities or other assets, an estimate of receipts should also be included.

(8) Translate the costs and receipts used for analytic purposes, as described in the preceding subparagraph, into the financial terms used in Federal budget preparation, presentation, and reporting.

d. The Program and Financial Plan as approved by the agency head will be submitted to the Bureau of the Budget. The Bureau of the Budget will also be kept abreast of significant revisions and updatings (see subparagraphs e and f, immediately below).

e. The Program and Financial Plan, as approved or modified by the agency head in conformity with guidance received from the Bureau of the Budget and the President (usually following the annual spring Preview), will form the basis for the agency's budget requests. Therefore, it should not be changed except in accordance with a procedure approved by the agency head. Appropriate arrangements should be made for participation of the Budget Bureau in significant changes.

f. Provision will be made for a thorough reappraisal and updating of the Program and Financial Plan annually. In this process, one year is added on to the Plan. Other changes to the Plan are to be expected from time to time and a procedure may be useful for making minor changes to the Plan without requiring agency head approval.

7. Analysis. An analytic effort will be undertaken to examine deeply program objectives and criteria of accomplishments. Whenever applicable this effort will utilize systems analysis, operations research, and other pertinent techniques. The analysis should raise important questions, compare the benefits and costs of alternative programs and explore future needs in relationship to planned programs. The sources of data used will be many, including most importantly, the Program and Financial Plan, special studies done throughout the agency, and budget, accounting and operating data. It is important to have continuity in the work of staffs doing this work and to build expertise in them over a period of years. As expertise is developed, more and more of the agency's activities can be subjected to these analytical techniques.

a. Special Studies on specific topics should be carried out in response to requests by the agency top management, the Budget Bureau, or at the initiative of the analytic staff itself. Suggestions should also be made by line operating managers. The special studies may involve intensive examination of a narrow subject or broad review of a wide field. The broad program studies envisioned here will often be hampered by a dearth of information and gaps in our knowledge which can be filled only by project studies and other micro-economic studies. Nevertheless, these broad studies should be assigned top priority in the agency's analytic effort.

b. Questions should be posed by the analytic staffs to other elements of the agency on program objectives, measures of performance, costs and the like.

c. A broad Program Memorandum should be prepared annually on each of the program categories of the agency. The Program Memorandum will summarize the Program and Financial Plan approved by the agency head for that category and present a succinct evaluation and justification. It should appraise the national needs to be met for several years in the future (covering at least as many years as the Program and Financial Plan), assess the adequacy, effectiveness, and efficiency of the previously approved Plan to meet those needs, and propose any necessary modifications in the previously approved Plan, including new legislative proposals. Thus, the Program Memorandum should:

(1) Spell out the specific programs recommended by the agency head for the multi-year time period being considered, show how these programs meet the needs of the American people in this area, show the total costs of recommended programs, and show the specific ways in which they differ from current programs and those of the past several years.

(2) Describe program objectives and expected concrete accomplishments and costs for several years into the future.

(3) Describe program objectives insofar as possible in quantitative physical terms.

(4) Compare the effectiveness and the cost of alternative objectives, of alternative types of programs designed to meet the same or comparable objectives, and of different levels within any given program category. This comparison should identify past experience, the alternatives which are believed worthy of consideration, earlier differing recommendations, earlier cost and performance estimates, and the reasons for change in these estimates.

(5) Make explicit the assumptions and criteria which support recommended programs.

(6) Identify and analyze the main uncertainties in the assumptions and in estimated program effectiveness or costs, and show the sensitivity of recommendations to these uncertainties.

d. In sum, the analytic effort will:

(1) Help define major agency objectives and subobjectives.

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(1) Analyze and review criteria by which program performance is measured and judged, and help to develop new, improved criteria.

(2) Compare alternative programs, both in terms of their effectiveness and their costs, old as well as new.

(3) Develop reliable estimates of total systems costs of alternatives over the relevant span of years.

(4) Analyze the validity of cost data.

(5) Identify and analyze program uncertainties; test the sensitivity of conclusions and recommendations against uncertain variables.

(6) Carry out systems analyses to aid in making program choices.

8. Relation of the system to the budget process.

a. Two products of the system will be utilized in the spring Budget Preview: the Program Memoranda (which incorporate in summarized form the relevant portions of the Program and Financial Plan) and Special Studies.

b. All annual budget requests in the fall will be based on and related to the first year of the current multi-year Program and Financial Plan, subject to such modifications as may be required by changing circumstances since the Plan was last reviewed and approved by the agency head. Within this framework the detailed formulation and review of the budget will take place.

c. The introduction of the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting system will not, by itself, require any changes in the form in which budget appropriation requests are sent to Congress. Further, this Bulletin is not to be interpreted to set forth changes in the format of annual budget submissions to the Budget Bureau. Circular No. A-11 will be revised as needed to provide guidance on such budget submissions.

d. Over the next few years agency operating budgets used to allocate resources and control the day to day operations are to be brought into consistency with the Program and Financial Plan. Performance reports that show physical and financial accomplishments in relation to operating budgets should also be related to the basic plan.

e. The Planning, Programming and Budgeting functions are closely related and there must be close coordination in the work of the various staffs.

9. An illustrative annual cycle. Program review is a year-round process of reevaluating and updating program objectives, performance, and costs. The annual cycle described below is presented for purposes of illustration and will be refined and changed over time. It is intended to identify check-points to assure that essential steps are taken and that current reviews, revisions and recommendations are given consideration at appropriate times in the budget cycle. Insofar as this schedule affects internal agency operations and does not affect Bureau of the Budget scheduling, it may be modified by each agency head to suit his needs. The illustrative annual cycle shows in outline form how the system would work after it is established and operating for an agency participating in the Preview.

January. Changes are made by the agency to the prior multi-year program plan to conform to Presidential decisions as reflected in the budget sent to the Congress.

March. By March bureaus or similar major organizational units within the agency will submit to the agency head their current appraisals of approved program objectives and multi-year plans and their proposals for (a) needed modifications, including measures to meet new needs and to take account of changing and expiring needs, and (b) extension of plans to cover an added year (e.g., 1972). The Director of the Bureau of the Budget will advise the agency head of any change in the overall policies and objectives upon which the currently approved plan is based.

April. On the basis of instructions from the agency head following his review of bureau submissions, bureaus develop specific program plans.

May. Analytic staffs complete Program Memoranda. Agency head reviews program plans and approves Program Memoranda for submission to the Bureau of the Budget. He may want to assign additional studies on the basis of this review.

May-June. The budget preview is conducted by the Bureau of the Budget. The basic documents for this preview are the Program Memoranda prepared by agencies which are to be submitted to the Bureau of the Budget by May 1, and Special Studies to be submitted over a period of several months preceding this date. Presidential guidance will be obtained, where necessary, on major policy issues and on the fiscal outlook.

July-August. Appropriate changes to program plans are made on the basis of the guidance received and of congressional legislation and appropriations. Budget estimates, including those for new legislative proposals, are developed on the basis of the first year of the currently approved program plans (e.g., 1968).

September. Budget estimates and agency legislative programs are submitted to the Bureau of the Budget.

October-December. Budget Bureau reviews budget estimates, consults with agencies, and makes its recommendations to the President. Presidential decisions are transmitted to agencies, the budget is prepared for submission to Congress, and the legislative program is prepared.

January. Changes are again made by the agency to the multi-year program plan to conform to Presidential decisions as reflected in the budget sent to the Congress.

10. Responsibility and staffing.

a. Personal responsibility for the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting system rests with the head of each agency. Since planning, programming, and budgeting are all essential elements of management, line managers at appropriate levels in the agency must also take responsibility for, and participate in, the system. Responsibility should be so fixed that the agency head receives the recommendations of his principal managers (e.g., bureau chiefs) on program plans as well as on the findings and recommendations of centrally prepared analytical studies. Similarly, arrangements should be made for obtaining original suggestions, recommendations, and views from other echelons in a manner consistent with the assignment of responsibility and authority.

b. Specialized staff assistance is also essential in all but the smallest agencies. Such assistance will be especially useful in the preparation and review of Program and Financial Plans and in the preparation of the appropriate analytical studies. Each agency will, therefore, establish an adequate central staff or staffs for analysis, planning and programming. Some bureaus and other subordinate organizations should also have their own analytical planning and programming staffs.

c. No single form of organization is prescribed since agency circumstances differ. Planning-Programming-Budgeting activities are functionally linked but it is not essential that they be located in the same office so long as they are well coordinated. However, it is important that the head of the central analytic staff be directly responsible to the head of the agency or his deputy.

11. Initial action under this Bulletin. The head of each agency listed in Exhibit 1 should see that the following steps are taken by the dates indicated. It is recognized that this is a tight schedule. Nonetheless, the President's interest in the prompt establishment of the new Programming, Planning, and Budgeting system requires that each agency exert every possible effort to adhere to this schedule.

a. Within 10 days after issuance of this Bulletin -- the agency head should designate an official to be responsible for the development of the Planning-Programming-Budgeting system for the entire agency and inform the Bureau of the Budget of his choice.

b. By November 1, 1965 -- each agency head should have tentatively decided, in cooperation with the Bureau of the Budget, the broad program categories to be used initially in the system. Bureau of the Budget staff are prepared to make suggestions on these categories.

c. By December 31, 1965 -- agency instructions, procedures, or regulations for the Planning-Programming-Budgeting system should be issued, and a copy forwarded to the Bureau of the Budget. If it is not possible to have these in polished form by this date, they should be issued at least in such form as will allow the agency to proceed without delay on the steps necessary to produce the material required by May 1, 1966, with the more complete and polished instructions or regulations issued as soon as feasible but not later than March 31, 1966.

d. By February 1, 1966 -- each agency head should have approved the basic program structure (including program categories, program subcategories, program elements, and the nonfinancial units for measuring program objectives and accomplishments in quantitative terms) to be used in the program plan.

e. By April 1, 1966 -- a comprehensive, multi-year Program and Financial Plan should be completed for consideration and review by the agency head. The Program and Financial Plan, as approved by the agency head, will be forwarded to the Bureau of the Budget.

f. By May 1, 1966 -- for the spring Preview, Program Memoranda described above will be forwarded to the Bureau of the Budget. By this date or earlier, Special Studies will also be forwarded. More specific guidance and instructions will be provided by the Bureau of the Budget.

A. AGENCIES TO BE COVERED BY THE PREVIEW

Department of Agriculture
Department of Commerce
Department of Defense - separate submission for:
 Military functions (including Civil Defense)
 Corps of Engineers, Civil functions
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Department of Interior
Department of Justice
Department of Labor
Post Office Department
Department of State (excluding Agency for International Development)
Treasury Department
Agency for International Development
Atomic Energy Commission
Central Intelligence Agency
Federal Aviation Agency
General Services Administration
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
National Science Foundation
Office of Economic Opportunity
Peace Corps
United States Information Agency
Veterans Administration

B. OTHER AGENCIES FOR WHICH A FORMAL
PLANNING-PROGRAMMING-BUDGETING SYSTEM IS ENCOURAGED

Civil Aeronautics Board
Civil Service Commission
Export-Import Bank of Washington
Federal Communications Commission
Federal Home Loan Bank Board
Federal Power Commission
Federal Trade Commission
Interstate Commerce Commission
National Capital Transportation Agency
National Labor Relations Board
Railroad Retirement Board
Securities and Exchange Commission
Selective Service System
Small Business Administration
Smithsonian Institution
Tennessee Valley Authority
United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

PROGRAM CATEGORY EXAMPLES

Coast Guard

Present Appropriation Structure

General and Special Funds:

Operating expenses
Acquisition, construction and improvements
Retired pay
Reserve training

Intergovernmental Funds:

Coast Guard Supply Fund
Coast Guard Yard Fund

Present Activity Schedule

Vessel Operations
Aviation Operations
Shore Stations and Aids Operations
Repair and Supply Facilities
Training and Recruiting Facilities
Administration and Operational Control
Other Military Personnel Expense
Supporting Programs

Proposed Program Structure

Search and Rescue
Aids to Navigation
Law Enforcement
Military Readiness
Merchant Marine Safety
Oceanography and Other Operations
Supporting Services

PROGRAM CATEGORY EXAMPLES

Forest Service

Present Appropriation Structure

- Forest protection and utilization
- Cooperative range improvements
- Forest roads and trails
- Access roads
- Acquisition of lands for national forests:
 - Superior National Forest
 - Special Acts
 - Cache National Forest
 - Wasatch National Forest
- Assistance to States, tree planting
- Expenses, brush disposal
- Roads and trails for States
- Other Forest Service permanent appropriations

Proposed Program Structure

- Timber Production
- Outdoor Recreation
- Natural Beauty
- Wildlife
- Water
- Forage
- Minerals and Mining
- Research
- Other